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VADE MECUM, VOLVENTIBUS ANNIS

THE MAYANS
SAN ANTONIO,
TEXAS

Degree 8 - 9

Number 110

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THE MAYAN TEMPLE LECTURES

NUMBER FOUR
YOUR ASSOCIATIONS

MAYAN
REVELATION

110

Beloved Centurion:

We are now at the halfway mark of our journey through the Temple Series, a series as rich in the knowledge we are seeking as the temple itself is rich in its great wisdom, its dignity, and the secrets it holds.

The thoughtful reading of these pages can bring to you a message that has the power to change your whole life if you will heed its meaning and put these truths to work now, while you are still impressed and inspired by its wisdom.

Be assured of this fact: we must make our decision as to what we want to

be in life, what we wish to accomplish, set our goal, aim high, keep our eyes, our hearts on that goal and let no obstacle interfere. This lesson teaches the importance of associations in your search for wisdom, success, happiness, peace and contentment of mind.

Solomon, in his great wisdom, said "He that walketh with wise men shall be wise." - and - "Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding. For the merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold. She is more precious than rubies: and all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her. Length of days is in her right hand; and in her left hand riches and honour. Her ways are ways of pleasantness and all her paths are peace. She is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her: and happy is every one that retaineth her."

REMEMBER ALWAYS - HELP THOSE WHO NEED YOUR HELP AND ASK HELP OF THOSE WHOSE HELP YOU NEED.

With this thought of your progress in mind, read with me:

A SPECIAL MEDITATION FOR YOU

I am a single cell in the great organism called humanity, a unit in the vast machine called mankind. How I carry on affects every other part, and how every other part carries on affects me. Conscious of this fact, I try so to carry out my duties and responsibilities as to fulfill my mission and upbuild my life in power, worth, and honor. In this I am a laborer together with God.

Your reading continues now with the five circles of Your Associations:

YOUR ENVIRONMENT

We know that environment affects our lives and ourselves. Of course we also affect it. A part of our environment is social. That is, it is made up of people. As a tree is swayed by the wind our lives are swayed by those about us. Each human contact leaves two people's lives and thoughts different in some way.

Our social environment surrounds us in waves or circles. Your nearest circle consists of the members of your family. As you work, talk, and think with them your lives all shape themselves toward a composite pattern, a kind of average of all. Your home is a training ground for the human relations you must maintain outside.

Next comes the circle of your friends, those whom among the crowd you have found to be congenial, and with whom you have been able to form ties of mutual sympathy and common interest. The sum of what they contribute to your viewpoint and actions is more than you can know, for your mind is especially open to the impact of their influence.

Next come your casual acquaintances. Their personalities affect yours less powerfully, but no less truly. Both they and you work together in common interests such as community and civic life. In that cooperation steel is bound to sharpen

steel and stone to wear upon stone.

The fourth circle consists of the strangers with whom you come into contact. They do not fail to affect your life either. You may meet someone a single time in your life, and yet know you carry from that meeting some new idea or conception of things. Even more often you have this experience without realizing it.

Next is that numberless throng of mankind in general whom you will never see. They too help to build the world you live in, and thus to determine the climate of thought and feeling we call the spirit of the time, the atmosphere in which we live and think. Some bond, however tenuous, relates each of us to every other one of us. We all share the effects of all the causes any of us set in motion. No man can live unto himself.

We must recognize one other circle of influence more remote in our social environment still, that of the people who have lived in the world before us. They helped make it what it is, and we have inherited from them conditions which silently affect our lives, usually without our knowing where the influence comes from.

Living in the world is, then, a grand adventure. It tries one's mettle to see what he can make of it and what he can accomplish in the grand give and take of it. Members of the human race are not like inert grains of sand or as drops of water carried about by winds and currents. They are living people with the power to think, will, and do. The power of what they think and do goes out like widening circles on the water. The world changes with the currents of their thought and action.

In this welter of opinion, struggle, difference, and agreement, each must live and play his part. If the majority plays a healing, helpful, constructive part, it will carry the world life that way. If the majority does the opposite it will have the opposite effect. Now and then someone starts a storm with a ruinous idea or a ruthless movement. Then others must work the harder to heal the wounds.

All these people, then, near and far, living and dead, constitute one of the means you can use to approach mastery of life. The friends you make and the companions you choose will inevitably carry you nearer or farther away from your goal. Be careful what you learn from them. Seek the companionship of those from whom you can learn most. Make the wisest and best use of what you learn, then release it in the life you live and the service you render in your time.

It is as if you were standing on the street corner with a tincup, and all these countless people were going by, each dropping something into your cup - coins of gold, silver, nickel, and copper, with now and then a button or a slug. Then you have to try to choose what is worth most and use it in building your life and work, disregarding the worthless and keeping the secondary values in the secondary place that rightly belongs to them.

EROSION

There works continually on the physical features of the earth's surface a process called erosion. By it mountains and hills are washed down by water and worn down by wind and temperature changes, reducing the high places and building

up the low ones. Even the more elevated land is being washed down the slopes into the streams and thus into the rivers. They carry some of it to lower places, and sweep the rest into the sea. Even the hardest rock surfaces are being gradually worn away and the sand seeks the lower levels. Thus Nature is always trying to wear down the roughness of the earth's surface and make it smooth and level.

It was from this process of erosion that the Hebrew prophet drew his figure when he declared there would come a time when every valley should be exalted and every mountain and hill brought low. He was trying to comfort and encourage a troubled people by assuring them that there would be a day when the mighty would be humbled, and the persecuted and unfortunate ones would be lifted up in a great sweep of justice where had been only injustice and wrong.

Let us now apply this erosion figure to something nearer to ourselves. A process of erosion, silent but powerful and sure, is going on everywhere all the time, and it affects each of us. Sometimes it is quicker and more violent, as when a great glacier of the ice age clipped a whole mile from the top of the Sierra Mountain Range with one stroke. Sometimes it is slow and steady as when the wind and rain of the centuries wore down the once towering Allegheny Mountains to their present moderate height. Nature's projects are vast. She can afford to take her time with them.

A similar process goes on in human life all the time as people are affected by each other's action and influence. It is something like the action of a great glacier itself. In any one glacial region, like Northern New York, for instance, pebbles and boulders are very numerous, and they are all smooth and more or less round. That is because in the glacial flow they have been ground together till the process has made them so. The sand on the desert or the seashore, too, has been reduced from rocks and ground to its present size and shape by constant breaking and washing. Any landscape looks quite different after fifty years.

Something very much like that happens to us in the hurly burly of life. We are affected by what we read and hear, by the influence of people around us, and by the pressure on our thinking and actions of the spirit of the times. At the same time the lives of other people are similarly affected by us. The result is a trend toward standardization. We tend to become as much alike as are the pebbles, boulders, and grains of sand.

This social erosion is a very good thing for us as long as its processes are making us stronger, surer, wiser, and better in the living of our lives. The problem it presents to each of us is while we are being more or less affected by all, to be most affected by the impact of the lives of the best people we know and can find. There is no question that you are going to be affected by people, as you always have been. If they are the right kind of people, well and good. If not, you must protect yourself against the pull and grind of their personalities and the conditions they create. If they have something worthwhile to teach you, be a willing learner. If not, turn to other teachers.

We have in America now an instance you can easily see of the effect of this constant wearing of mind on mind. Each section once had its own dialect. We knew by one's talk where he came from, and perhaps something of the conditions from which he had emerged. There was the talk of the mountains, the plains, the woods,

the sea, the office, the home, and the farm.

But not any more. People now talk much alike, wherever they come from. We do not hear the rich drawls, and twangs, and softened consonants we used to hear and like. Certain speed-ups of the erosion process have broken it up in a generation. Motion pictures, radio, television, going to other parts of the country to college, population shifts, touring, business travel, army life - these and other things have given us a common language. We are like axes on grindstones. Let us hope we will be bettered by it. But we can make some choice of the influences that are to affect us.

EROSION OF PERSONALITY

Since this process of erosion works in terms of personality too, the people with whom you associate help to determine your destiny. Any time you pause and analyze and appraise yourself in the same way that you might analyze someone else, you discover that you are quite a different person from what you once were, perhaps different even from what you were the last time you looked yourself over. You may have climbed a distance you had not realized, or you may have slipped back a distance of which you had not dreamed. In either case you have changed. Many hundreds on the Mayan Path have stated that they find it difficult to realize they are the same person they were when they first became members.

Your associations have had much to do with that, possibly everything. The impact of personality on personality, mind upon mind, and viewpoint upon viewpoint is a constant modifier of us all. A chance conversation with a stranger sheds light on something that had been in the shadows before. A random remark from someone who has thought a thing through, may either show you you have been mistaken about something, or had not considered it sufficiently, or were dead right. In any of these cases your life has been affected. It happens all the time among those with whom you associate most and whose ideas you trust. Here then is one of your keys to mastery - associate as much as you can with the kind of people you would like to be.

In childhood we imitate those we see. We do not discriminate much, but take people as we find them. They are grown-ups, and that is about all that matters. They do certain things in certain ways, and to us that becomes the pattern of how to be large, strong, and important.

In youth we imitate those we admire, the ones we have made our heroes at least for the time being. A parent, teacher, minister, friend, or some character in history or literature suggests an ideal that challenges and holds us. If we grow up to some hero ideal we are likely to choose another more advanced.

In mature years we have largely ceased to imitate, for it takes reality to satisfy us then. We are still affected, however, by the impact of personality, and we are still changed and modified in one direction or another by influence, conversation, opinion, or just the human tendency to conform.

No doubt you have seen people who were friends or constant companions grow more and more like each other with passing time. Have you not seen husbands and wives who had affected each other so long that they had come to think alike, act

alike, and after many years actually to look alike? This is something that happens in the process of human erosion.

Nathaniel Hawthorne has brought out a special angle of this process and made it the theme of his story, The Great Stone Face. It is the story of Ernest, a boy who lived near and admired the image of a great stone face carved by Nature on a mountainside. Its gentle, benign majesty became for him an ideal. There was a legend that some day a man would appear the image of whose face it was, and Ernest anxiously awaited that day.

Several noted men came who were thought to be the ones, but for one reason or another the claim of each broke down. Ernest grew old and gave up hope. Then one day he discovered that he himself was the man of prophecy, the image of the Great Stone Face. He had gazed at and admired the image on the mountainside so long that, in time, he actually grew like it.

That is what happens when one's thoughts are chained to an ideal. Most of the crowd we pass by with little thought, though we may be unconsciously impressed with something in this person or that. But now and then someone comes into our lives who exerts a powerful influence upon us. If we admire that person deeply and long enough a resemblance of personal opinions and traits will begin to develop.

Select your associates with this fact in mind. This is no suggestion that you disdain anyone, for snobbishness certainly is no mark of mastery. See in each and all the divine possibility, whether it is developed or only latent. Respect all human beings, remembering that but for some accident of birth the positions of the king and the beggar might be reversed. Do what you can for whomever you can, but always have at least a few associates from whom you can learn wisdom and worth. In any case you will react to your social environment, so keep the pull upward and not downward.

SOME EXAMPLES

Behind most of the masterful personalities of the ages have lingered the shadows of those who inspired and helped them to become what they were. Very few of us would have done even as well as we have without such influences. Look back and note how many have turned you back from making mistakes or helped you to accomplish things worth while.

Is it not amazing how these people appeared on the scene at just the right time? Look at the list again. Are not some of them people who made little claim to special attainments themselves, but who wanted to help you attain something they had missed or something they knew was out of their reach? And is it not wonderful how some of these people played their little parts in the drama of your life, perhaps for an hour or even a few moments, then stepped back into the shadows of obscurity again? You see the world needs masters of living, wants them, and is in a great conspiracy with Destiny to discover and prepare them.

After all these centuries we are still glad to sit at the feet of Aristotle and listen with amazement at his understanding of sciences in his day yet unborn. But it is not Aristotle alone who is speaking. It is also his discoverer and teacher, Plato, who dreamed of a great republic before there were such things, and who

conducted a parapatetic or "walkabout" school in which Aristotle and others were taught while they walked or sat informally with their teachers.

But as we hear Plato giving forth the great dialogues that serve as vehicles for his advanced idea of government and life it is not wholly his voice we hear either. It is partly the voice of a bald, snub-nosed man who loved to stand on the streets of Athens and ask people questions that intrigued their minds into thinking. He was arrested for changing people's viewpoints too successfully, and though he told his judges he proposed to obey God rather than them he was condemned to death by poison. When one of the friends with him at the last asked how he wished to be buried, he replied, "As you like - if you can catch me." He was the inspirer and teacher of Plato, and his name was Socrates.

So runs the chain of cause and effect all the way through the generations that throb out the lineage of souls. Someone had lighted the torch of Socrates, and there was someone else to take it from the dying hand of Aristotle. If no one has broken the succession, someone is still carrying it up the years. Masterliness of spirit has its own ancestry and its own posterity, unless someone fails.

Still more remarkable is what the Master of Galilee did with twelve ignorant and unlearned men picked up seemingly at random from the ways of everyday life. None of them knew how to marshal their thoughts or to express them well, and none of them understood what it means to release new forces into the stream of history and thus change a world.

One poor wretch failed because he could not escape the trammels of a divided mind. All the other eleven rose to greatness, three or four of them to towering eminence. That greatness was latent in them, of course, but it would never have been actualized had it not been for the impact on their lives of the personality of a Master who could see past what they were to what they could become. He himself knew what was in man, and He knew that one thing in a man is his possible self. Happy are those who meet someone who can inspire that self to development before that day when otherwise it would become only the person someone might have been.

Perhaps the greatest name among the disciples of Jesus as they live in the memory of today is that of Simon, whose name the Master changed to Peter, from the Greek word meaning "a rock". He was a simple fisherman, who met Jesus because his brother Andrew brought him and introduced him. Peter became one of the three standing nearest the Master in His work, and one of the forefront leaders in starting the organized Christian movement afterward. Andrew is scarcely heard of after that moment of introduction, yet without him his illustrious brother would have lived and died among his nets. Such was one of the countless ways in which one life can turn on the influence of another.

GATHERED STRANDS

In closing this lesson, let us think of some of the kinds of friends and associates who can help you most in the attainment of your aim. As we have already said, a seeker for mastery should be a friend of all, no matter how humble, lowly, and obscure they may be. Any other attitude would seriously hinder his progress, for it would show that he has not properly evaluated a human being. But we are thinking now of that comparatively limited number you can know and associate with as

SPECIAL FRIENDS. To others you will give. From THESE you will receive.

First, have as many friends as possible who have PASSED YOUR STAGE of ADVANCEMENT, and who, therefore, have something to share with you. In every place there are real sages from whom one can learn much. Do not fear to contact them lest they would make you unwelcome. Many of these people would be pleased to have earnest hearts seek them out. After all, that is one of the chief things a master is for. If an occasional one rebuffs you, do not take it to heart, for you will know he was not a master either of life or of himself.

Second, seek the association of people with like ideals and purposes with yourself. We do not mean like some people seek friends "just like themselves" so they can waste their lives together and confirm each other in mutual aimlessness and uselessness. We mean finding friends who will bring you congenial encouragement, and help instead of hindering you on the way. You have a purpose and a goal. You want to go on. You do not want a static life. Find friends who feel the same about it, so you can help and encourage each other understandingly.

Third, give some time to older people, especially alert-minded ones. Ask them questions about the past and what it has taught them. What they can tell you about life will save you the trouble and pain of having to learn it the hard way. See where they have failed or succeeded, for they are old enough not to mind telling you. Observe the mellowness, poise, caution, and careful judgment time and experience have taught them. Remember that the past has something to offer the present. Every new day must grow out of the old yesterdays. You may be surprised what life values the old will gladly lay in your hands without cost.

Go where outstanding personalities are going to be or speak. Observe them. Study the working of their minds. Try to see what has made them what they are. You will catch some of the contagion of their personalities.

Such people are usually very friendly, and you may be able to make a contact or form an acquaintance. The writer went one warm summer evening to a university auditorium to hear a lecture by Ilya Tolstoy, son of the great Russian writer. He went up after the lecture to meet the speaker, and was met with a comment on the hot weather and the wish for a drive in the open air. He promptly invited the great man for a drive, and for the better part of an hour on a country road in the moonlight enjoyed an unforgettable conversation. Such opportunities can be valuable. Some of them may even be providential.

Everyone who belongs to a church should cultivate a more than ordinary friendship with his pastor, and be it said that many people do so who do not belong to the church, sometimes making themselves among a minister's most valued and most helpful friends. The minister has given deeper consideration than most people can to some very important matters. Learn about them at first hand. There may be an exchange of values for he may find it helpful to talk with you. Remember that while he has casual contacts with many, he has sympathetic and understanding ones with a much more limited number.

A university professor told a class, "You will leave here and go out to a lonely life. Wherever you go only a few will understand you or appreciate the knowledge, understanding and vision you have labored for." Perhaps anyone whose soul

seeks the heights may find it so at times, but there will always be some with whom you can share and some others who will share with you. So the valley will keep gaining from the hill, and so will the best in each be released.

MASTER PRAYER

I thank Thee, O Lord of heaven and earth for those with whom I share this human journey. In order that I may not come to Thee empty-handed let me gain, both by giving and receiving, those life values which moth and rust do not corrupt, nor thieves break through and steal. Let my pathway cross those of many master souls, and let me meet them with open ear and heart. Amen.

Beloved seeker, may the reading of this monograph renew your resolution to strive toward mastery itself through associations and may that noble desire be abundantly blessed through those who seek you and those whom you seek.

Your Class Instructor.

Your Next
TEMPLE LECTURE

Explains the Importance in Your Life of the Following Subjects:

YOUR SELF-EXPRESSION

A Special Meditation for You!
The Meaning of Self-Expression
Lengthened Shadows

The Great Obligation
Beauty for Ashes

* MASTER PRAYER